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# GREAT BRITAIN AND THE WAR

BY

A. MAURICE LOW, M. A.

Washington Correspondent of the London Morning Post

Author of "The American People, a Study in National Psychology"

[Fourth Printing]

Washington

Columbian Printing Company, Inc.



## SOME PRESS COMMENTS

"There can be no doubt as to Mr. Low's being the finest, clearest, most unanswerable statement of England's case as yet presented. It is a noble utterance which covers every point in the most dignified language, and it is difficult to conceive how anything stronger and truer can ever be written.

"The British may well rest their case on Mr. Low's admirably expressed appeal to the fairness and intelligence of the civilized world."

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"The best because the most compact and lucid statement of the English case that has yet appeared is the reply of A. Maurice Low, the Washington correspondent of the London Morning Post, to the German statement put forth by Ambassador Count von Bernstorff.

"Mr. Low puts it unanswerably as follows \* \* \* "

—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"On this page is printed a remarkable article by Mr. A. Maurice Low, Washington correspondent of The London Morning Post, and a writer of distinction and ability. Mr. Low makes a thorough study of the German contentions and both his argument and his conclusions are intensely interesting and instructive. The contentions upon which Count von Bernstorff, German Ambassador to the United States, bases his entire case are examined in detail and proved to be absolutely fallacious and untenable, in the light of the official correspondence and the facts.

"Mr. Low not only justifies Great Britain's participation in the war as an obligation of honor which could not be avoided but he finds that the entire responsibility for the war rests with Germany, and that any peace is impossible until the main issue is decided and German militarism definitely destroyed beyond all hope of resurrection.

"The article is certainly one of the best of its kind that has been written, and should be read by all those who desire a concise and authoritative statement of the points at issue and an examination of the German defence. It is the first duty of patriotism to be informed on the present war, so far as essentials and principles are concerned, and Canadians generally will be well advised to read Mr. Low's discussion."

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—Publisher's Note to "The Real Truth About Germany."



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In a recent interview given by Count von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, he based his defence of Germany's position upon these assertions:—

1. That Russia provoked the war.
2. That had Russia not been certain of the support of Great Britain she would not have made war upon Austria.
3. That, Austria having been forced into war, Germany was compelled by her treaty engagements to come to the support of her ally.
4. That England, because of her jealousy and enmity of Germany, encouraged both Russia and France to make war on Austria and Germany, although England had no cause to be jealous of Germany.

Having thus proved to his own satisfaction that Germany is the helpless victim of British duplicity and Russian brutality and French malignity, Count Bernstorff wonders why the preponderating sympathy of America is with England and her Allies and against Germany and Austria.

### Documents Tell the Story

I shall not attempt to answer the first assertion, because it is unnecessary. Every one who has read the British and German official diplomatic correspondence knows the truth. To that correspondence Count Bern-

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\* Reprinted, in response to many requests, from the *New York Herald*, of September 21, 1914.

The discussion of the so-called German "peace proposals" has since been added.



storff can add nothing and from it I can subtract nothing. That correspondence requires neither explanation nor elucidation. It shows precisely what the British Government did in its attempts to prevent war; it shows what Count Bernstorff's sovereign failed to do to curb his ally. If that correspondence does not convince the reader certainly nothing that Count Bernstorff can say will alter his opinion; nothing that I might write will influence any person's calm judgment. Those telegrams that passed between Ministers and Ambassadors in the fateful days of July are now history, and to the judgment of history they may be safely left.

Count Bernstorff asserts that if Russia had not been certain of the support of England she would not have forced war upon Austria. The *tu quoque* is the weakest form of argument. Nevertheless I feel justified in asking if Austria had not felt absolutely certain of the support of Germany would she have challenged Russia? The answer is obvious. Single handed Austria is no match for Russia. Count Bernstorff knows that; the professional advisers of the Austrian Emperor knew it. The military resources of Russia are so incomparably superior to those of Austria that only a desperate gambler, willing to put his crown on the table as the stakes, would have risked the throw of the cards. And Austria did not have a free hand. She was hampered on her flank by Servia, a little nation, but so powerful that Austria's ill-starred campaign against her has collapsed. Austria could not disguise the menace of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She had violated the treaty of Berlin when she absorbed them into her empire in pursuance of her "civilizing mission," and their people looked for the day when they might throw off the Austrian yoke.

But I do not rely on assertion. For ten days prior to July 31 Sir Edward Grey, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had labored day and night to prevent war. On that day he sent a telegram to Sir Edward Goschen, the British Ambassador in Berlin, expressing the hope that the conversations then proceeding between Austria and Russia would lead to a satisfactory result. The stumbling block hitherto, he explained, had been Austrian mistrust of Servian assurances and Russian mistrust of Austrian intentions with regard to the independence and integrity of Servia. In order to overcome these suspicions Sir Edward Grey suggested Germany might sound Vienna and he would agree to sound St. Petersburg whether it would be possible for the four disinterested Powers—Germany, Italy, France and Great Britain—to offer to Austria that she should obtain full satisfaction of her demands on Servia, provided they did not impair Servian sovereignty and Servian integrity, Austria already



having declared her willingness to respect them; and Russia would be informed that the four disinterested Powers would undertake to prevent Austrian demands going the length of impairing Servian sovereignty and integrity, and he added:—

“I said to the German Ambassador this morning that if Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace, and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, I would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris, and go the length of saying that if Russia and France would not accept it His Majesty’s Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences; but otherwise I told the German Ambassador that if France became involved we should be drawn in.”

In the light of the above can any honest man say that Russia felt certain of the support of Great Britain? As a matter of fact, neither Russia nor France was sure of what Great Britain would do, and her course was to be governed solely by whether they were “reasonable.” What Sir Edward Grey wanted above and beyond anything else was to preserve the peace of Europe, and to accomplish that, to save the world from the horrors it is now experiencing, he was willing to throw the great influence of England on the side of Germany and Austria if they were sincerely working for peace and to leave France and Russia to their fate if they were unreasonable and determined to provoke war.

Further confirmation, if any is needed, that neither France nor Russia knew what England would do and that she did not declare her position until circumstances forced her to take up arms is to be found. On that same day, July 31, the French Ambassador in London was trying to induce British support of France in case she was attacked by Germany and was urging Sir Edward Grey to promise to come to the assistance of France. But Sir Edward Grey would make no promise. There were circumstances, he explained, that might prevent England from remaining neutral and force her into the war as the ally of France, but he could enter into no engagement. On August 1 the British Ambassador in Vienna telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey, “There is great anxiety to know what England will do.” Austrian anxiety was shared by Russia. Thus as late as the first of August neither of Britain’s subsequent Allies, Russia and France, nor one of her soon to be foes, Austria, knew what England would do.

And yet Count Bernstorff says the war would not have happened had not Russia been certain of the support of England.



What about Germany? Did she feel certain what England would do? The correspondence is of peculiar interest as tending to controvert the German Ambassador's assertion that Germany was dragged into war. From the beginning of the critical relations between Austria and Russia, owing to the despatch of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia, Sir Edward Grey had regarded the matter as a quarrel between Austria and Servia in which the other European Powers were not concerned. He knew, of course, of the Austro-German alliance, as he knew of the Franco-Russian alliance, but he saw no reason why those alliances should be invoked. Germany and France he considered "disinterested" Powers and placed them in the same category as Italy, also the ally of Germany and Austria, and England, neither the ally of Russia nor France, but who might be compelled to support France and Russia under certain circumstances. If Russia and Austria must fight, Sir Edward Grey held, it was bad enough, but that was better than to see the whole of Europe at war. Germany was not bound to come to the support of Austria unless she was determined to force France into the war; France need not go to the assistance of Russia unless she was looking for a *casus belli* against Germany.

France had joined with England in using her influence with Russia to keep the peace. France had given no provocation to Germany. On July 29 Sir Edward Goschen telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey he had been invited that evening to call upon the Chancellor, who said that if Austria was attacked by Russia Germany would be compelled to come to her assistance. Provided that the neutrality of Great Britain were certain, every assurance would be given to the British Government that Germany aimed at no territorial acquisition at the expense of France. Sir Edward Goschen asked what about the French colonies, but the Chancellor said that he "was unable to give a similar undertaking in that respect."

As for Belgium—whose neutrality it will be remembered Germany had guaranteed—"it depended upon the action of France what operations Germany might be forced to enter upon in Belgium, but when the war was over Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany." As a further bid for English neutrality the Chancellor added, with almost childlike simplicity, as if vague promises in the future counted for anything in an emergency so great, "he had in mind a general neutrality agreement between England and Germany, though of course it was at the present moment too early to discuss details, and an assurance of British neutrality in the conflict which the present crisis might produce would enable him to look forward to the realization of his desire."



And Count von Bernstorff would ask the American people to believe that Germany was trying to avoid war with France.

Sir Edward Grey's reply was spirited and to the point. There is nothing finer in the entire correspondence. It exhibits the Secretary of State indignant at the offer of a bribe, but still trying to preserve peace and showing Germany how that could be done.

Sir Edward telegraphed the next day to the British Ambassador:—

"His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms.

"What he asks us is in effect to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten, so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.

"From a material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a great Power and become subordinate to German policy.

"Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.

"The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation of interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain, either."

Having rejected the bribe offered by Germany, having with dignity and restraint repudiated the suggestion that Great Britain could remain passive while France was being crushed to satisfy the overweening ambition of Germany, Sir Edward Grey still showed that the one thing of all others he desired was peace, and he pointed out the way by which that object might be attained. He instructed his Ambassador to say to the Chancellor:—

"One way of maintaining good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe. If we succeed in this object the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be, *ipse facto*, improved and strengthened. For that object His Majesty's Government will work in that way with all sincerity and good will."

Is this the language or the act of a man trying to entice Russia into making war on Germany?

Sir Edward Grey was to give still further proof of his sincerity and his



almost fanatical attachment to the cause of peace. In that same despatch to Sir Edward Goschen he continued:—

“And I will say this:—If the peace of Europe can be preserved and the present crisis safely passed my own endeavor will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia and ourselves, jointly or separately.”

Could anything be more straightforward, more binding, than this voluntary pledge? For years Germany has told the world that she was not seeking war, that her enormous army and her powerful navy, rapidly rivalling that of Great Britain, were safeguards of peace and to prevent France and Russia from attacking her. Sir Edward Grey bound himself to bring about an arrangement by which Germany would be assured she need have no fear of the hostility of France, Russia or Great Britain. Had Germany been sincere in her protestations that she was ready to defend herself, but reluctant to provoke her neighbors, she would eagerly have accepted Sir Edward Grey's offer, but, as Sir Edward Goschen reported, the Chancellor received the communication “without comment.”

And Count von Bernstorff imposes upon American intelligence by trying to have it believed that Great Britain was persuading Russia to go to war.

### Germany Began the War

Count von Bernstorff asserts that Germany did not begin the war. It is not material who strikes the first blow when two men are determined to quarrel, but for the vindication of history the facts should not be garbled. On August 2, before Russia, France, or Great Britain had committed a single act of hostility against Germany, she violated the neutrality of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. On the preceding day Sir Edward Grey had telegraphed Sir Edward Goschen that the authorities at Hamburg had forcibly detained British merchant ships, and he requested that the German Government send immediate orders for the release of the vessels, as the effect on public opinion would be deplorable unless that was done. The British Government, he added, was most anxious to avoid any incident of an aggressive nature, and he hoped the German Government would be equally careful not to take any step which would make the situation impossible. These vessels were released the next day after their cargoes had been forcibly seized, an act that Sir Edward Grey protested against.



On August 3 the German Government sent an ultimatum to Belgium demanding free passage for her troops and threatening to use force if the request was refused. Sir Edward Grey protested against Germany violating Belgian neutrality, which Germany, in common with England, had guaranteed. On August 4 the German Government informed the Belgian Government that it would enter Belgium, "in view of the French menaces." For the first time Germany used the fear of France as a pretext for war. Hitherto she had pretended Russia was a menace; now she suddenly discovered it was France that threatened. On that same day Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Sir Edward Goschen that he continued to receive numerous complaints from British firms of the detention of their ships at Hamburg, Cuxhaven and other German ports. This action Sir Edward declared, was totally unjustifiable and in direct contravention of international law and of the assurances given by the Imperial Chancellor.

Thus Germany had thrice offended against the law of nations and the moral law. She had violated the neutrality of Luxemburg, whose neutrality she had guaranteed. She had violated the neutrality of Belgium, whose neutrality she had agreed to respect. She had seized British vessels and their cargoes while Great Britain and Germany were still at peace.

Count von Bernstorff, speaking as German Ambassador to the United States, asserts that Germany did not strike the first blow.

Having thus exposed a few of the errors into which the German Ambassador has been unconsciously betrayed in dealing with the political phases of this wanton war, attention may be usefully called to some of His Excellency's lapses when he discusses the psychology of American public sentiment. He mournfully recognizes the fact that American sentiment is hostile to Germany and explains it by saying that almost immediately after the declaration of hostilities England cut the German transatlantic cable, so that the United States should be misinformed as to the truth and only news passing through London and Paris could reach America.

This is childish. The cable was cut as a military measure, as Count von Bernstorff very well knows, and for no other reason. The American people have the news and the truth; they get the news in their newspapers and the truth they can find by reading the German and British White Papers, which have been published in this country. They have heard the truth about the destruction of Louvain, the slaughter of women



and children in Antwerp, the scattering of mines in the North Sea and the tribute exacted from Brussels and Liege in defiance of the humane spirit of the age. The German Ambassador ought not to regret that the cutting of the cable has made it difficult for news to reach America; rather he ought to pray that other cables may be quickly cut, so that no further knowledge of German atrocities can reach the United States.

Count von Bernstorff professes not to be able to understand English enmity and cannot find any justification for it, although he acknowledges England has long been jealous of Germany's increasing prosperity and her growing navy. It is curious what tricks memory plays. For years Germany—not her people or individuals, but her officials and governing classes—has shown its dislike of England and offensively rattled the sabre in the sound of English ears. There was the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, for instance; the obscene insults to the late Queen during the Boer war, the Kaiser's sneers and slurs at King Edward, the crisis precipitated over Agadir and the revenge he took in making France dismiss Delcassé.

It was these things and hundreds of others that made it so difficult for the well wishers and friends of Germany in England—and I have no apology to make for counting myself as one of them—to use their influence, much or little as the case might be, to bring about better relations with Germany. There is no military party in England. England, with the sole exception of the United States, is the one great Power that is not subordinate to the military. No Englishman wanted to go to war with Germany. No Englishman could see that there was anything to be gained by war with Germany. Time after time Germany gave us provocation and we kept our temper. Those of us who believe that war is usually a crime, the most insensate act nations can commit, believed that the German Emperor was too sensible of his obligations to his people and posterity, too wise not to recognize the desperate risk he took in plunging Europe into war when the honor of his country was not impugned nor national safety endangered.

The fact is the Kaiser held all too lightly the military power of Great Britain. He is an autocrat, a militarist, and therefore he cannot understand the aspirations and the motives of a democracy. That a country so powerful as Great Britain, with a world-flung Empire, should content itself with a standing army insignificant compared with the millions Germany is able to call to the colors; that it should rely for its defence on volunteers instead of resorting to conscription; that the civil and not the military power should be supreme—these things to the Kaiser were in-



congruous and were to be explained only on the theory that England was a decaying nation, that the England of the Napoleonic wars had lost its virility, that, engrossed in money making and trade, it had become steeped in luxury and enjoyment and was either too cowardly or too indifferent to fight. And accepting that as a premise, it is easy to see how he reached his conclusion—England would not fight; England was not to be feared.

Part of the Kaiser's reasoning was correct. England does not want to fight, but the mistake the Kaiser made was in believing that England would not fight. She will fight, as the Kaiser has learned to his cost, when honor is at stake and when not to fight would be, as Sir Edward Grey said, "a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover." She might have escaped war had she been content to see Belgium outraged and the plighted fate of nations mocked and the covenants between peoples broken by dismissing a treaty as "only a scrap of paper;" she could have imitated the example of Italy and found a pretext for deserting her allies; she might have bought immunity by accepting the insincere promises of Germany and claiming she had given greater assistance to France through her diplomacy than she could render by force of arms. These things England might have done. These things England would have done if the Kaiser's estimate of the English character had not been founded on false premises. But these things England did not do. Forced to fight, she has fought, because there are times when a nation, similar to an individual who loves peace and abhors a brawl, must either defend himself or in shame no longer dare claim kinship of his fellows.

It does not become the German Ambassador to accuse England of being jealous of Germany's prosperity. While Germany has built a wall of tariffs against England, England has thrown the doors to her market places wide open. She has shown no hostility to the legend "Made in Germany." A commercial nation—and commerce is England's strength—does not go to war to overthrow competition, because no one knows better than the banker and the merchant and the trader that war does not pay. Germany found in the United Kingdom and the British dominions and dependencies her richest and most profitable market, and through her own folly Germany has lost a trade she can never recover.

In two weeks after the declaration of war the German merchant marine, the pride of the Kaiser's heart, had virtually disappeared from the seven seas. German merchant vessels, from the magnificent Imperator and Vaterland down to the disruptable looking tramps, all the shipping that so proudly flew the German flag on the Atlantic and the Pacific, on



the main traveled routes as well as in remote places where a cargo is to be picked up or goods made in Germany can find a purchaser, is either interned in neutral ports or tied up in German harbors or condemned as lawful prize by British courts.

The German navy, which was the challenge of Germany to Britain on the seas, the greatest provocation one nation ever gave to another, which the German Emperor fondly imagined would make him as supreme on the sea as he imagined he was invincible on land, has been compelled to seek the security of its fortified bases. While British ships go about their ordinary business, while the great transatlantic lines under the British flag are running on their regular schedules, while cargoes of foodstuffs and other commodities are flowing in a never ending stream from American ports eastward and the current runs undisturbed in the reverse direction and British goods find their accustomed markets, Germany is beginning to feel the pinch of hunger, German industries are prostrate, German commerce is paralyzed.

It is these things that make Germany so bitter against England. They explain why Count von Bernstorff seeks to throw the responsibility upon England and hopes to gain American sympathy. He frankly admits that he is amazed by "the general hostility of the American press." The American press—and I think I speak with exact knowledge—has not been hostile, but it has been just. It has not been partisan, but it has pronounced judgment. On the evidence submitted it has rendered decision. Before the great bar of conscience the Kaiser has been brought to his assize. History has rendered its verdict. Without cause he provoked a war; to gratify ambition he sowed desolation. Little children he has made fatherless, and brides to mourn their husbands. The tears of the living and the blood of the dying drench Europe. His legions have marched, and with them have gone ruin, death, horror. He has spared neither young nor old. He has spread the torch and with flame and sword devastated city and plain. He has made the world a house of mourning; he has stricken down the firstborn and brought sorrow to the aged. He has made honor a jest and the word of a King a thing of scorn. He has invoked the name of God and defiled man made in the image of his Maker. Under his iron heel he has crushed civilization and checked its progress.

Knowing the truth, it would be amazing if the American press and the American people were able to withhold their sympathy from the nations forced by Germany to defend themselves.



### Does Germany Want Peace?

Since the above was written there have been numerous articles in the newspapers intimating that Germany was willing to make peace, and the German Ambassador has endeavored to make the American people believe that while Germany is ready to end the war, Great Britain and her Allies prefer to fight rather than to restore peace to the world and end its toll of blood and misery.

On September 6 Mr. Oscar S. Straus, a member of the Hague Permanent Tribunal of Arbitration, came to Washington and told Secretary Bryan he believed that the German Emperor would be willing to consider terms of peace. Mr. Straus had met Count Bernstorff at a dinner in New York, and had been given to understand by him that Germany would be glad to have the United States exercise its good offices to bring hostilities to an end. Mr. Straus asked the consent of the German Ambassador to repeat the conversation to Mr. Bryan, and was permitted to do so.

Mr. Straus saw Mr. Bryan and was authorized by him to call on the British and French Ambassadors and ascertain from them the views of their Governments. Both Ambassadors informed Mr. Straus that they had received no instructions on the subject, but they would communicate any proposal made to them. For the benefit of the reader unfamiliar with the forms of diplomacy, it should be explained that an Ambassador cannot bind his Government without specific instructions, and can only act in accordance with the instructions he has received from his Foreign Minister. The British and French Ambassadors informed Mr. Straus that their Governments desired peace, as they always had, but it must be no temporary truce; it must be peace made under such conditions that it would be a lasting peace, and Great Britain, France and Russia could feel certain they would not again be suddenly attacked.

Mr. Bryan had in the meantime asked Count Bernstorff to come to Washington so that he could ascertain whether he had been authorised by the German Emperor to seek the good offices of the United States. Count Bernstorff admitted he had received no instructions. His conversation with Mr. Straus was based on his own belief that the German Emperor was not adverse to peace. Mr. Bryan asked Count Bernstorff if he had any objection to Mr. Gerard, the American Ambassador to Germany, ascertaining whether the German Government would accept an offer of mediation made through the United States. To this Count Bernstorff assented.

The British and French Ambassadors at once communicated the sub-



stance of Mr. Straus' conversation to their respective Governments. Sir Edward Grey, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, speaking for England as well as her Allies, confirmed in effect what Sir Cecil Spring Rice, the British Ambassador, had informally said to Mr. Straus. It was that Great Britain desired peace, but it must be a lasting peace. If Germany had terms to offer that would effectually insure peace the Allied Powers would receive and consider them.

Germany having taken the first steps it was incumbent upon her, if she was sincere and acting in good faith, to make known the terms she proposed. If she was not sincere, if Count Bernstorff, with or without instructions, was simply "fishing," hoping to learn that the Allies were discouraged and disheartened and would welcome peace at any price, the purpose would have been served and the United States would be told that Germany had no terms to offer.

The reader will be able to form his own conclusions as to Count Bernstorff's sincerity and the good faith of Germany.

Mr. Gerard in due course saw the German Imperial Chancellor, who had the effrontery—not to use a harsher word—to say that "the United States ought to get proposals of peace from the Allies." When Mr. Gerard's report was made to the President, Mr. Wilson saw that it was useless to press the matter further.

If Germany had been sincere, if in good faith she had wanted peace, the Chancellor would not have banged the door in the face of the United States.

It is only necessary to say a few words regarding the present position of Great Britain and her Allies. England desires peace, sincerely and ardently she longs for peace, but it must be no sham peace, no mockery of the word.

If ever a nation fought the battle of the world, fought for liberty and in the cause of righteousness, that nation is England. She is today doing what she did a hundred years ago when she rid the world of the menace of a military despot and saved Europe from coming under the dominion of one man. She stands today the bulwark against militarism and a military oligarchy. She stands today for liberty, freedom of thought and action; the subordination of the sword to the rule of law. She stands today the champion of Democracy, the right of man to be "sole sponsor of himself." If she is crippled or crushed, the dam that holds back militarism is swept away. For many years Europe has been an armed camp. Should England cease to be a Great Power all Europe will be divided



into two parts—Germany and the rest, military satrapies governed by an autocrat in Berlin, arrogating to himself the divine right to govern.

There will no longer be any "little nations." Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway will be robbed of their nationality and independence, their national aspirations, their manner and customs, their ideals, their memories of the past, their hopes of the future. They will be ground under the iron heel of Germany, conquered provinces, their people valuable only as increasing the power of German military autocracy, an autocracy that will not be satisfied with having enslaved Europe but will seek the conquest of other worlds so that Democracy may perish from the face of the earth and absolutism be the creed of kings.

This war is not of England's seeking. She has been forced into it, and having been forced into it she will not relinquish the sword until it can be sheathed with safety. Resolutely, with grim determination the British Empire is determined there shall be an end of militarism. Too long has the world lain under the grievous curse of its armed hosts. Too long has the terror of war threatened. Too long has the corruption of the sword worked.

England has not gone into this war with a light heart. There are today no light hearts in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, in Canada, in Australia, in any place where the British flag lies. But whatever the cost, whatever the sacrifice, we must see this thing through, we must save civilization from a return to barbarism, from the shame of reverting to the day when justice was unknown and only strength was feared.

Were England to make peace now, to make peace on such terms as the German Emperor would only too willingly accept, she would be forever disgraced and deserve the contempt of all mankind. England has taken upon herself a very solemn duty—the preservation of the national existence of Belgium against the rapacity of Germany. The most virulent enemy of England, of France, of Russia has for Belgium only admiration; profound admiration for her courage, profound pity for the ruin and desolation that have moved the compassion of the world.

Accident involved Belgium. She was the ally of none of the combatants. She was not concerned in the jealousies or intrigues of the Powers. She had no revenge to satisfy; no long standing debt of hate to settle. She offered no provocation. She was peacefully pursuing her own affairs, her people happy and prosperous, their safety assured. For had not Germany, France and England entered into a treaty to respect the neutrality of Belgium?



The German Emperor had pledged his Kingly word, and he broke it with never a thought of shame. The quickest way to strike at the heart of France was through Belgium; Belgium must either allow her territory to be violated or she would be crushed. When England remonstrated, when England protested against the infraction of the treaty guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium, England was told that a treaty was merely a scrap of paper. So lightly did the German Emperor hold his honor.

Gallant little Belgium! To her honor was more than a scrap of paper. To her duty was more than the hypocrisy of a phrase. Confronted with the choice between safety bought at a price that only cowards would pay or freedom purchased at a price that might make the bravest hesitate, she did not flinch. She would fight. She might be conquered, but she would not be a craven.

Belgium must be protected; her safety must be assured; she must be compensated for the wrongs she has suffered; her cities must be rebuilt; her starving and ruined people must be helped. Only in one way can this be done—Germany must be deprived of her power again to outrage Belgium; for all the destruction that Germany has done, Germany must be made to pay. It would be a farce to rely on German “assurances,” to place any faith in a treaty. Germany has shown she has no respect for treaties. She laughs at a scrap of paper. All that she respects is force; to her force is more to be respected than honor. To make peace now would be to hand over Belgium, racked and tortured, to the executioner. It would be disgraceful. It would be a greater infamy than Germany’s infamous crime.

The present generation is thrilled when it reads of battles and great deeds, the warm blood of youth is chilled when, with the ready response of youth, it reads of the dead and dying, the horrors of the battlefield, but youth cannot grasp what it means to a nation to be at war. It is the men of a former generation who understand. *They* know. They recall those four long, agonizing years, years that tried men’s souls, that brought out all that was best and bravest in a people, when women with breaking hearts smiled through their tears and companioned by death lost not their courage, when men met disaster bravely and defeat made them only the more resolute.

They were fighting for a great cause, and it sustained them. The same spirit animates England today.

I desire to correct the statement that has so often been made in the German press and by Germans in high official position that England



wants to destroy Germany. Nothing could be farther from our thoughts. We have no grudge against Germany; we English have no dislike of the Germans. What we want to destroy is German militarism. That is the only destruction we are determined to accomplish.

Consider for a moment. Does any sensible man ruthlessly destroy his own property? Is it not only a fool who ruins his best customer? Would it not be the act of a madman to make himself poorer? This is the price England will pay were she so foolish to "destroy" Germany. Englishmen have millions of pounds invested in German enterprises, and German destruction means the loss of those investments. Germany was England's best customer, as England was Germany's best customer, and is it to be supposed that England would deliberately destroy her best market? Cannot everyone see that the greater the prosperity of Germany, the more Germany buys from England, the more England will sell to Germany? Every ship Germany has put on the ocean; every yard of goods Germany has sold in South America, in India, in Africa, in England; every machine she has built, every pound of dyestuffs, every barrel of cement she has made; everything that has kept her factories and her people profitably employed has been an extension of the world's commerce, has added to the wealth of the world, has made it possible for more people to buy the things that England manufactures, has made England richer.

What can England make out of this war? Nothing, absolutely nothing. England's land hunger has long been satisfied, she has cast no covetous eyes on German colonies. Were Germany to pay an indemnity so huge that it would virtually reduce her to slavery, the millions would not compensate England for all that the war will cost her, for the loss of life, for the misery of women, for the tears of the fatherless, for the dislocation of commerce, for the impoverishment of the whole world. And when the world is poor England, because of her industrial and financial position, is the chief sufferer.

The German people do not believe that England seeks their destruction, but German militarism must justify itself. Callous as the ruling class of Germany has always been to the opinion of the world, in this emergency, knowing it stands condemned, it craves the support of the United States, and in defence attributes to England base motives.

We have put on our armor. We shall carry it through the heat of the day. Its burden is heavy, but we shall not take it off until men again breathe free, no longer affrighted by the terror of war.

When that day comes we shall make peace.







